



For Release: Thursday, July 21, 2016

16-1300-ATL

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Occupational Employment and Wages in Lexington-Fayette — May 2015

Workers in the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.46 in May 2015, about 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 17 of the 22 major occupational groups, including life, physical, and social science; legal; and computer and mathematical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 4 of the 22 occupational groups, including production, and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; construction and extraction; and sales and related. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Lexington	United States	Lexington	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$23.23	\$20.46*	-12
Management	5.0	4.8	55.30	43.90*	-21
Business and Financial Operations	5.1	3.6*	35.48	29.25*	-18
Computer and Mathematical	2.9	2.3*	41.43	32.46*	-22
Architecture and Engineering	1.8	2.0	39.89	34.06*	-15
Life, Physical, and Social Science	0.8	1.0*	34.24	22.27*	-35
Community and Social Services	1.4	1.2*	22.19	20.88*	-6
Legal	0.8	0.6*	49.74	37.15*	-25
Education, Training, and Library	6.2	6.0	25.48	27.39	7
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1.3	1.2*	27.39	21.92*	-20
Healthcare Practitioner and Technical	5.8	7.2*	37.40	33.20*	-11
Healthcare Support	2.9	2.7	14.19	14.25	0
Protective Service	2.4	2.3	21.45	16.80*	-22
Food Preparation and Serving Related	9.1	9.4	10.98	9.83*	-10
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	3.2	2.9*	13.02	11.77*	-10
Personal Care and Service	3.1	2.8*	12.33	11.48*	-7
Sales and Related	10.5	9.6*	18.90	16.40*	-13
Office and Administrative Support	15.8	14.9	17.47	15.76*	-10
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	0.3	0.6*	12.67	13.96	10
Construction and Extraction	4.0	3.0*	22.88	20.36*	-11
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	3.9	4.1	22.11	21.03	-5
Production	6.6	9.6*	17.41	18.53	6
Transportation and Material Moving	6.9	8.2	16.90	15.60*	-8

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Lexington-Fayette is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Lexington-Fayette had 25,250 jobs in production, accounting for 9.6 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$18.53, compared to the national wage of \$17.41.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the production group included team assemblers (5,330), inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (1,780), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,490). Among the higher paying jobs were power distributors and dispatchers and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers, with mean hourly wages of \$40.53 and \$29.96, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were sewing machine operators (\$9.41) and laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.98). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_30460.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the production group. For instance, coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders were employed at 3.6 times the national rate in Lexington, and extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic, at 3.2 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, printing press operators had a location quotient of 1.0 in Lexington, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Kentucky Department for Workforce Investment.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,386 establishments with a response rate of 74 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2015 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Lexington-Fayette, Ky. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, Scott, and Woodford Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production Occupations	25,250	1.5	\$18.53	\$38,530
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,490	1.3	29.96	62,320
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	400	1.0	15.08	31,370
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	(5)	(5)	17.15	35,670
Team Assemblers	5,330	2.5	21.52	44,760
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	3,730	8.5	14.41	29,980
Bakers	160	0.5	10.68	22,210
Butchers and Meat Cutters	160	0.6	14.64	30,460
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	190	0.7	16.96	35,280
Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	440	3.2	22.08	45,920
Rolling Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	100	1.6	15.81	32,880
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	350	0.9	16.07	33,430
Machinists	670	0.9	19.77	41,130
Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	310	1.2	14.15	29,420
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	210	1.1	17.90	37,230
Tool and Die Makers	230	1.6	29.38	61,120
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	520	0.7	21.10	43,890
Prepress Technicians and Workers	70	1.0	18.52	38,520
Printing Press Operators	320	1.0	16.71	34,750
Print Binding and Finishing Workers	(5)	(5)	15.76	32,770
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	(5)	(5)	9.98	20,750
Sewing Machine Operators	(5)	(5)	9.41	19,570
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	110	0.6	19.23	39,990
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	40	0.5	12.49	25,980
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	60	0.4	11.94	24,840
Power Distributors and Dispatchers	(5)	(5)	40.53	84,300
Power Plant Operators	40	0.6	(5)	(5)
Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	250	1.2	19.44	40,440
Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	70	0.8	17.33	36,040
Crushing, Grinding, and Polishing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	250	4.2	18.45	38,380
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	120	0.5	15.48	32,200
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	170	1.4	12.39	25,760
Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	40	0.3	16.67	34,680
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1,780	1.8	17.86	37,140
Dental Laboratory Technicians	110	1.6	19.21	39,960
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	310	0.4	13.68	28,460
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	610	3.6	24.76	51,490
Painters, Transportation Equipment	80	0.8	21.94	45,640
Painting, Coating, and Decorating Workers	150	5.0	13.48	28,040
Etchers and Engravers	30	1.8	11.88	24,710
Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	100	1.3	13.74	28,570
Helpers--Production Workers	1,070	1.3	11.01	22,910

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production Workers, All Other	960	2.1	9.27	19,290

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Lexington-Fayette, KY, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_30460.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.